

**GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON DISABILITIES AND SPECIAL
EDUCATION
Education Committee**

LOCATION

**Governor's Council Conference Room
3601 C Street
Anchorage, Alaska
Teleconference**

Meeting Date

**February 28, 2013
1:30 p.m.**

Attendees:

Taylor Gregg – chair
Don Enoch
Ernie Manzie
Heidi Haas

Community Members:

Art Arnold
Christine Inglet
Debbie Kitelinger

Staff:

Teresa Holt
Christie Reinhardt

Prepared by: Sheila Garrant,
Peninsula Reporting

CALL TO ORDER – 1:30 p.m.
ROLL CALL

There was not a quorum for this meeting.

Welcome from the Chair

Announcements and Good News

Teresa Holt announced the unanimous passage of House Bill 88 in both the House and Senate and has moved on to the Governor's office for his signature. House Bill 88 is a bill to remove the term "mental retardation" from state statutes and replace it with "intellectual disability."

Teresa Holt gave an update on Senate Bill 17, which is the SESA bill. SB-17, which was introduced by Senator Stevens and co-signed by Senators Ellis and Gardner, had two hearings in the Education Committee and moved onto the Finance Committee where it currently sits after two hearings in that committee. The companion bill, House Bill 87, which was sponsored by Representative Higgins and co-sponsored by Representatives Wilson, Nageak, Kawasaki and Feige, was heard in the Education Committee and then referred to the Finance Committee and has not yet been heard.

Christie Reinhardt shared the good news that Teresa Holt has officially been named as the Executive Director of the Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education.

Reading of the Council Mission

Art Arnold read the Council mission statement: Creating change that improves the lives of people with disabilities.

Approval of Agenda and Approval of Minutes

An approval of the agenda and minutes was tabled. Christie Reinhardt asked for an addition to the agenda to have a discussion regarding Senate Joint Resolution 9, to which there was no objection.

Correspondence

Teresa Holt reported that Alaska Mental Health Board requested the Governor's Council write a letter of support for the Statewide Suicide Prevention Council's Senate Bill 39, which is the bill that would institute an alert system similar to the Amber Alert; that when a vulnerable adult goes missing, the media would be alerted and people could assist in looking for this person. The Council did support that request and write a letter of support.

Conference Updates

Christie Reinhardt updated the committee members that the Inclusive Practice Award given out at the ASSEC Conference was presented to Earl Jeffery from Hyadaburg, Alaska. She noted that there were over 300 people in attendance at the awards luncheon. Teresa Holt commented that ASSEC has become successful in that after several years of presenting this award, it has become the highlight of the luncheon.

Christie Reinhardt reported that there was a very good turnout for Key 26, and commented that it was very exciting to be present in Juneau when House Bill 88, which is the respectful language bill, passed unanimously.

Senate Joint Resolution 9 Discussion

Christie Reinhardt opened a discussion regarding Senate Joint Resolution 9, which is a proposed constitutional amendment that would allow public funding for private schools, also known as school vouchers. Christie Reinhardt asked the Education Committee members for pros and cons on this issue with regards to special education students. Art Arnold commented that it may be wise to discuss this topic with a larger attendance of committee members. Christie Reinhardt will send committee members background information on SJB-9 and schedule a separate meeting to discuss this matter more comprehensively.

Special Education Workforce Development

Christie Reinhardt reminded the group that part of the committee's work plan was to look at workforce development within the state of Alaska, to define the current programs, to evaluate the effectiveness of those

programs, and look for alternatives for workforce development. She noted that Alaska has chosen sort of a “grow your own” approach by approving special education certifications to existing teachers or helping general education teachers transition to special education, and in a broader sense develop teachers that would specialize in teaching in rural Alaska. She mentioned alternatives that have been discussed are getting special education certifications for paraprofessionals, which is what some states are doing; using emergency personnel or recruiting special education staff from local service provider agencies; and direct scholarships for special education to high school students.

Art Arnold suggested Christie Reinhardt contact Dr. Deborah Lo at the University of Alaska Southeast to get some information regarding a four-year program at UAS with a special education track.

Christine Inglet commented on a tele-services piece as a means to provide services in rural Alaska.

Report from HSGQE Subcommittee

Christie Reinhardt reported that the subcommittee met and outlined their timeframe and defined what information they will be looking for:

- Number of special education students completing requirements and not passing the exam
- Number of special education students passing the exam but not completing requirements
- Number of special education students not completing the requirements and not passing the exam
- Number of special education students completing the requirements and passing the exam

They also will be looking at what other states are doing as far as differentiated diplomas and alternate assessments, for example, comprehensive end-of-course assessments selected by the student’s IEP team.

Report from SESA

There was no report from SESA.

Report from EED

Don Enoch reported that the Department has been busy and recently attended an auditory disabilities summit in Texas, conducted a couch-to-coach training in Anchorage, and attended a SESA board meeting in December.

Don Enoch reported that the Department held a stakeholder's webinar on the APR in January. He also reported that all the compliance monitoring is complete, and they are awaiting the return of corrective actions. The next webinar is on the supplemental workbook, and they have made slight modifications that the districts need to react to, which is in tandem with their new automated grant management system.

Don Enoch noted that the special education handbook has been posted online, and he strongly recommends that if there is anything that needs clarification or if anyone finds inaccuracies to let them know, because the handbook will be updated annually or perhaps semi-annually if need be.

Don Enoch commented that staff at EED is busy with the intensive reviews and the full staff should be back in the office within a week.

Meetings/Conference/Trainings

No meetings, conferences, or trainings were announced.

Next Meeting

The next meeting for the Education Committee is scheduled for March 21st, 2013, 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 2:35 p.m.